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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method of dropping a pumpdown plug or ball is revealed. The assembly can be integrally formed with a plug-dropping head or can be an auxiliary feature that is mounted to a plug-dropping head. The release mechanism is actuated by remote control, employing intrinsically safe circuitry. The circuitry, along with its self-contained power source, actuates a primary control member responsive to an input signal so as to allow component shifting for release of the pumpdown plug or ball. Multiple plug-dropping heads can be stacked, each responsive to a discrete release signal. Actuation to drop the pumpdown ball or plug is accomplished even while the components are rotating or are moving longitudinally. Using the apparatus and method of the present invention, personnel do not need to climb up in the derrick to actuate manual valves. There is additionally no need for a rig floor-mounted control panel with hydraulic lines extending from the control panel to remotely located valves for plug or ball release.

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